

What is claimed is:

1. A brightness-adjustable illumination device for manual use, comprising:
  - a main body;
  - an electric light source arranged in the main body;
  - a manually actuatable operating element arranged on the main body and configured to control brightness of the light source;

wherein the operating element is configured to be adjusted by a linear movement.
2. The illumination device according to claim 2, wherein the main body has a longitudinal axis and wherein the linear movement is realized parallel to the longitudinal axis of the main body.
3. The illumination device according to claim 2, wherein the main body is rod-shaped.
4. The illumination device according to claim 2, wherein the linear movement is a linear sliding movement.

5. The illumination device according to claim 1, configured to be continuously adjustable.

6. The illumination device according to claim 1, wherein the operating element comprises an adjustable electric resistor for controlling an electric current intensity flowing through the light source.

7. The illumination device according to claim 6, wherein the adjustable electric resistor is a sliding potentiometer.

8. The illumination device according to claim 7, wherein the sliding potentiometer has a sliding contact secured on the main body and wherein the sliding potentiometer has a winding movable relative to the sliding contact.

9. The illumination device according to claim 6, comprising a mechanical resistance element configured to provide a mechanical resistance when moving the operating element between a rest position without illumination output and an operating position with illumination output.

10. The illumination device according to claim 9, wherein the mechanical resistance element is a profile change on the main body and wherein the operating element comprises a spring element exerting a force when moving the operating element between the rest position and the operating position.

11. The illumination device according to claim 10, wherein the profile change is a projection.

12. The illumination device according to claim 9, further comprising an indicator device providing a visual representation of a brightness level of the illumination device.

13. The illumination device according to claim 12, wherein the indicator device represents the brightness level uniformly in steps.

14. The illumination device according to claim 12, further comprising a fastening device for detachable attachment of the illumination device on objects.

15. The illumination device according to claim 14, wherein the fastening device is a clip.

16. The illumination device according to claim 14, wherein at least one of the operating element, the adjustable electric resistor, the mechanical resistance element, the indicator device is arranged in the area of the fastening device.

17. The illumination device according to claim 14, wherein at least one of the operating element, the adjustable electric resistor, the mechanical resistance element, the indicator device is substantially integrated into the fastening device.

18. The illumination device according to claim 1, wherein the main body comprises a housing for receiving at least one battery for operating the electric light source.

19. The illumination device according to claim 1 in the form of an otoscope, an ophthalmoscope, or a manual slit lamp.